

# Whooping Cough Facts

## for Parents of School Children



### WHY WHOOPING COUGH IS SERIOUS...

Columbus has seen a rise in pertussis cases (whooping cough) over the last several months. With children now in school, the risk is high for even more cases.

Whooping cough is a disease that is passed easily from person to person. It can cause coughing so severe that it leads to vomiting or broken ribs.

Children diagnosed with whooping cough are required to stay out of school for at least five days and may miss weeks of school.

Even worse, children with whooping cough can spread it to babies at home. It can be deadly for babies, causing them to cough so much that they cannot breathe.

It usually begins with cold-like symptoms and often proceeds to a severe constant cough that ends with a “whoop” sound. Older children, teens and adults may not have the “whoop”.

### WAYS TO PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY...

#### Get Your Pertussis Booster (Tdap)

Tdap is recommended for children 11 years of age and older, and also for parents and care givers of children under 2 years old. For vaccine availability, contact:

- Your healthcare provider
- Local retail pharmacy clinic
- Local health department

#### Make Sure Your Children are Up-to-Date on Their Immunizations

Young children need a total of five pertussis immunizations to be protected. Also, students entering 7th grade are now required to have a booster dose of the Tdap before they go to school.

#### Cover Your Cough and Wash Your Hands

Pertussis is spread by coughing. Use the sleeve of your clothes, elbow, shoulder or a tissue to cover your cough. Wash your hands often. Alcohol-based hand cleaners also work (with at least 60% alcohol) when you can't wash your hands.

#### Stay Home When Sick

Keep children home when they are ill. Seek medical attention for a worsening cough and talk with your doctor about a possible pertussis infection.

**PROTECT YOURSELF.**  
**PROTECT YOUR FAMILY.**

# Get Immunized!